

<p style="text-align: center;">OFFICE OF OPERATIONS SAFETY INSTRUCTION</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Policy and Procedures for the Use of Material Handling Equipment and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Motorized Carts in USDA Headquarters Facilities</p>
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I. Introduction

The use of material handling equipment and motorized carts is essential to many operations in the USDA National Capital Region (NCR). However, such use must be controlled in a manner that will minimize the risk of potential injury to pedestrians, avoid damage to the buildings and property, and minimize disruption to the work being carried out in the offices throughout the facilities.

II. Applicability

All Office of Operations (OO) divisions and contractors that own or use material handling equipment and/or motorized carts used for the distribution of materials and supplies within the NCR facilities shall adhere to the policy and procedures contained herein.

III. Definitions

NCR Facilities: South Building; Whitten Building; George Washington Carver Center (GWCC); Beltsville Service Center (BSC)

Material Handling Equipment: Dollies, hand trucks, or small motorized equipment used for the pickup and delivery of materials and supplies. This equipment is not equipped to carry a driver, either standing or sitting.

Motorized Carts: Vehicles capable of carrying both supplies or equipment and a driver, either standing or sitting. Carts with rear cushions may also carry one sitting passenger.

IV. Policy and Procedures

In order to ensure the safety of all USDA employees and visitors, to reduce the risk of damage to USDA property and physical facilities, and to maintain an environment conducive to work, the following rules of operation shall apply to all material handling equipment and motorized carts used in the USDA NCR facilities.

A. General Procedures

1. In all situations, and in every location, pedestrians shall have the right of way. Operators may not overtake or pass pedestrians, except when pedestrians voluntarily yield to moving equipment.
2. All material handling equipment and motorized carts must be approved for use by an authorized representative of the Washington Area Service Center (WASC), GWCC, or BSC, as appropriate, prior to being put into operation.

3. Material handling equipment and motorized carts shall be operated by trained employees who have been appropriately instructed in the rules of safe operation.
4. Each Division will be responsible for training their operator employees on the safe operation of the material handling equipment and motorized carts used. They shall also ensure that all contractor operators have been so trained.
5. Material delivered to USDA loading docks is to be removed from pallets promptly and transferred to the appropriate material handling equipment. If pallets are used for delivery, they must be returned to the loading dock immediately upon the offloading of their contents.
6. Pallet jacks and pallet trucks, either hand operated or motorized, may be used on unfinished concrete floors only. All equipment used on finished floors must be equipped with pneumatic tires or soft wheels that effectively reduce noise and do not damage the floors.
7. Operators are responsible for ensuring that their equipment is in safe working order before each use, and for reporting mechanical or equipment defects to their supervisor.
8. Extreme care shall be taken to avoid contact with pedestrians and collisions with building components or fixtures. Any accident or near miss involving people must be reported to the Safety and Environmental Branch (S&EB) at 202-720-6808 immediately. Any accident or near miss involving buildings or property shall be reported to the S&EB within 24 hours.

B. Specific Procedures for Material Handling Equipment

1. Material handling equipment shall not be allowed in any passenger elevator. All deliveries of supplies and materials, regardless of weight, shall be via one of the following designated freight elevators:

South Building: Elevators 26, 34, 36, 37, 44, 46, 47, 54, 64, and 66

Whitten Building: Elevator 4

GWCC: Elevators 1-2, 2-5, 3-8, and 4-11

2. Equipment shall not be left unattended, except as necessary for the loading and unloading of materials and supplies.

C. Specific Procedures for Motorized Carts

1. Carts shall be operated in the corridors at speeds no faster than a brisk walk.
2. Carts shall be equipped with flashing amber safety lights, which shall be activated while the cart is in use.
3. Carts shall come to a complete stop and sound a warning signal prior to making turns or crossing intersections.

4. Carts are permitted on the designated freight elevators only. See B.1. above.
5. The transportation of passengers on motorized carts is prohibited, unless the cart is equipped with a seat for the passenger. When a passenger seat is available, only one passenger may be transported, and only if seated. **Passengers are strictly prohibited from riding on any equipment that does not have a seat specifically for that purpose.**
6. Materials on the cart shall not protrude dangerously beyond the sides of the cart or obstruct the operator's view.
7. Carts shall not be parked in stairwells or corridors overnight or on weekends, or at any time in such a manner as to obstruct pedestrian traffic or create a safety hazard.
8. Carts are to be maintained in a safe state of repair.
9. The wearing of earphones while operating carts is prohibited
10. Carts shall be used for official government use only. Any other use is prohibited.
11. Each operator is responsible for reading and observing the above operating rules.

V. Motorized Cart Identification

WASC, GWCC, or BSC, as appropriate, shall provide a numbered identification plate for each cart operated within their respective facilities. The list of cart numbers and their respective owner organizations will be forwarded to and maintained by the S&EB. Each user organization is responsible for notifying the appropriate Center immediately upon the purchase of any new carts. Under no circumstances is a cart to be operated without an identification plate. The use of identification plates will allow for the identification of any cart that is observed operating in an unsafe manner or in violation of the operating rules stated in this document.

VI. Violations

Anyone who observes the improper use of material handling equipment or motorized carts, or who witnesses the equipment being operated in violation of these rules and procedures should report the time and location of the incident, along with the identification plate number, to the S&EB at 202-720-6808. In the event that the S&EB staff determines that negligence or recklessness has resulted in damage to any USDA building or property, the employing organization responsible for the equipment or cart may be required to pay for the cost of repairs.

Anyone found guilty of violating these procedures or any applicable rule or regulation of 41 CFR 102-74, Federal Management Regulation – Facilities Management, may be subject to administrative or disciplinary action.

MOTORIZED MATERIAL HANDLING EQUIPMENT OPERATOR'S DAILY CHECKLIST

VEHICLE NO _____

OPERATOR_____

DATE _____

[illegible]